SIKKIM

GOVERNMENT GAZETTE

EXTRAORDINARY
PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY

Gangtok Tuesday 18th July, 2006 No. 207

GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT
GANGTOK

NO 643/DIT/06 **DATED: 15/7/06**

NOTIFICATION

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY POLICY FOR THE STATE OF SIKKIM

The IT revolution has catalyzed growth and innovation across the world in a manner which has few parallels in modern history. This has enormous implications on culture, way of life and governance.
The Government of Sikkim is aware of the transformational changes IT technology and would like to harness its capabilities for the welfare of the state by having up to date citizen services, ensuring greater accountability through e-governance and also promote IT investments in the state.

The Government of Sikkim has placed Information Technology high on its agenda. The Information Technology Policy has been formulated to put Information Technology on a firm footing in the state. The Department of Information Technology will essentially play the role of an enabler and catalyzing agent.

OBJECTIVES AND MISSION STATEMENT

The IT policy of Sikkim is centred around the following premise and the Mission Statements:

- Empowering citizens and making life easier for them through E-Governance.
- Facilitating Income and employment generation in the private sector.
- Improving productivity in the Government Departments through computerization.
- Use of information tools in the administrations to improve governance.
- Making Sikkim a totally computer literate state.
- Reducing the digital divide.
- Using Information Technology to map the resources of the state.
- Using Information Technology to bring succor to the disabled.

IT POLICY AND INITIATIVES

The following initiatives will be taken to meet the above objectives

Employment Generation

- Information Technology will come up as a major source of income in the state. Information Technology as a service industry is not characterized by high transportation costs and is environmentally friendly. It can propel the state on the path of eco-friendly development.
- Sikkim has an advantage of high literacy, absence of labor problem, a population that speaks good English and a pleasant climate. These attributes can be leveraged for the development of IT enabled services in the state. In fact, IT enabled services and Business Process Outsourcing can come up as a cottage industry in the state in which entrepreneurs can sit at home and do software development for offshore companies.

- Software Technology Parks will be established at vantage locations in the state to provide incubation space to prospective entrepreneurs who want to take up software development, setting up of Call Centre, Business Process Outsourcing etc.
- Sikkimese are artistic in nature. This potential can be tapped by establishing Digital Animation Centres where cartoon and animation films can be prepared.
- IT enabled Institutes of Training would be established in the coming years.
- Sikkim will become a favored destination for all IT enabled services.
- The Information Technology Department will provide Computer Aided Design (CAD) support to local handloom and handicraft industry.

E-Governance and Computerisation in the Government

- A E-governance Steering committee headed by the Chief Secretary will be constituted to provide direction and monitor to all e-governance projects being implemented in the state under the National e-governance Plan (NeGP).
- Departmental Nodal Officers will be designated to liaise with the Information Technology Department for implementing computerization in their respective Departments.
- Procedures in the Government would be re-engineered to make them amenable to computerization and e-governance.
- As far as possible, content will be localized. Text to speech software will be developed in local languages.
- Attempts will be made to make all E-governance projects self-sustaining through Public Private partnership.
- All key sectors will be computerized: Land Records, Property Registration, Taxation, Treasuries, Municipalities, Panchayat, Employment exchanges.
- Each Government office will be equipped with computers with always on Internet Connectivity. (This would include field level connectivity officials like VLO's & VLW's).
- The Community Information Centres set up in the state would evolve into integrated citizen centric centers in which citizens can pay their utility bills, register births and deaths and even obtain trade and driving licenses.
- All citizens will be issued citizen smart cards.
- The Department of Information Technology will actively assist other Government Departments in computerization and development and maintenance of websites.
- The Department of Information Technology will create an environment whereby citizens can submit applications on-line for availing various Government facilities.
- All Departments will have powerful servers for back office servers. A working Management Information system will be in place.
- Video conferencing facility will be made available till the Sub-Division level.
- Telemedicine facility will be available till the PHCs (Public Health Sub-Centre) level.
- Proposals for procurements of computers and peripherals by Government Departments will be vetted by the Department of Information Technology with an aim to get value for the money and standardize the equipment.
- Business processes in Government Departments would be re-engineered, improved, and integrated with the Department functions. They would be supported with modernized, standards-based information systems which provide "end-to-end" flows of information. Information analysis would be a pre-requisite for the required process re-engineering.

Resource Mapping

- All old heritage records in monasteries, libraries, state archives will be digitized. All gazettes and notifications will also be digitized. A mechanism for archiving all current documents will be in place.
- The rich biodiversity of Sikkim which include its flora and fauna would be inventoried through bioinformatics.
- All natural (viz forest, rivers etc) and manmade (roads, PHC sewerage pipes etc) resources will be mapped through Geographical Information System (GIS).
- Using Satellite imagery, disaster prone areas (viz landslide, glacial outburst) will be identified and monitored.
- The Human resource of the state specially those persons practicing traditional medicine etc will be kept in a database.

Capacity Building in Information Technology

- Sikkim will become a completely knowledge based society in which every citizen will be computer literate.
- Training Programmes in computer familiarization will be taken up for Government Employees and citizens on a mass scale. To begin with all Government Employees will be trained in the use of computers.
- Distance Education through satellite/CORDECT/Optical fiber/ WiFi to each and every household.
- Particular emphasis will be given to career oriented courses like Call Centre Training, Desk Top Publishing, Multimedia, Animation, CAD etc.
- Computer Education will be imparted to all school children.

Technical Infrastructure

- High speed Optical fibre will be available to District Headquarters and Sub Division Headquarters.
- Like electricity, internet bandwidth will be ubiquitous. All households will be connected on the Internet through Cordect, WiFi and normal telephone line. Sikkim will therefore be a totally wired society. A State Wide Area Network (SWAN) would be in place.

Cyberlaws, Security and Intellectual Property Right (IPR)

- The Information Technology Act will be implemented in its letter and spirit. Cyber Laws that confer legal status to electronic transactions and documents will be in place.
- There will be a legal mechanism to control piracy of information technology products.
- Intellectual Property Right (IPR) protection support will be given to all entrepreneurs developing software and animation.
- All on line transaction would be secured by a fool proof mechanism of digital signature and biometric like fingerprint and its recognition.

IT for the Disabled

- Information Technology will be used to bring about succor to the physically challenged like those suffering from visual, speech and hearing impairments.
- Special localized software for persons suffering from visual impairment, cerebral palsy, speech and hearing disorders etc will be developed in association with National Association for the Blind, Spastics Society and other similar institution.

Publicity and Interaction with local entrepreneurs

- The I.T. Department in collaboration with local entrepreneurs will participate in national level exhibitions to showcase Sikkim as a favoured I.T. destination.
- Seminars and workshops on a regular basis will be organized highlighting the I.T. scenario in the state.

Concession and Incentives

All the concessions announced by Government of Sikkim under the Sikkim Industrial Promotion and Incentive (Amendment) Act, 2003 vide Notification No. 11/LD/RC/2003 of dated 13th August 2003 are applicable to Information Technology Industries in Sikkim.

Further the incentives and concession extended by Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India from time to time as per the North East Industrial Policy will also be applicable to Sikkim.

This notification supercedes the earlier I.T. Policy for Sikkim issued vide notification no. GO/3/DI/99 dated 31/3/1999.